



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
375 Jackson Street, Suite 600  
St. Paul, MN 55101-1854

---

**To Be Sent Via Electronic Mail**

June 23, 2008

MINNESOTA BULLETIN NO. 360-8-17

SUBJECT: PER – Employee Development – Performance Management in USDA

Purpose. To announce the requirement for **mandatory** completion of a new training course, “Performance Management in USDA,” targeted for supervisors and human resources practitioners.

Expiration Date. September 30, 2009.

**Action Required By: August 25, 2008**

**Background.** One of the requirements of the Performance Appraisal Assessment Tool (PAAT), a tool jointly developed by the Offices of Management and Budget (OMB) and Personnel Management (OPM) to measure the effectiveness of performance appraisal systems, is to demonstrate that supervisors have completed performance management training or retraining on the requirements and operation of the Agency’s performance appraisal system within the last two years. To accomplish this, the course, “Performance Management in USDA,” is now available and has been added to the appropriate learning plans in AgLearn of all NRCS supervisors and human resources practitioners. Supervisors include:

- 1) All PSOS and ASTC’s
- 2) All DC’s
- 3) All RC&D Coordinators
- 4) All MLAR Project Staff Leaders
- 5) Everyone else that supervisor’s staff or occupies a supervisory position

Upon completion, each “learner” will send an email notification to their applicable ASTC or PSOS Leader when the AgLearn training has been completed and certificate printed.

By **August 25, 2008**, each ASTC and PSOS member will send Charles Montgomery an email verification that all managers and supervisors under their supervision, including themselves, have completed the mandatory AgLearn training “Performance Management in USDA”.

The objectives of the course are to increase knowledge of and effectiveness in performance management at NRCS. As we continue to look for ways to achieve Human Capital Strategic Goal #3, which is to: *Advance to a results-oriented culture that fosters innovation, motivates staff, and sustains a high performing, and diverse workforce.*

The training course, available through AgLearn, is titled- Web-Based DA Performance Management 01- and is accessible at <http://www.aglearn.usda.gov/>. Participants are encouraged to print a certificate of completion from the learning history after completion of the course to document course completion.



**Course Description.** This online training course is designed to help supervisors at NRCS learn how to better manage performance by focusing on developing credible and measurable performance standards and evaluating employee performance within the overall context of performance management. This training will benefit supervisors and human resources practitioners by increasing their fundamental knowledge, ability, and expertise in performance management. A comprehensive Desk Guide that includes job aids, tip sheets, and other documents are accessible through the resources section of the training course.

The performance management course consists of four modules that can be completed separately or all at once. Total time required for the entire course is approximately two hours. To receive credit for an individual module, participants must complete each lesson in the module in one session. If the participant exits the module before completing all lessons in the module, the participant will have to start the module over at the next session.

If you have any questions, contact Charles Montgomery, State Training Officer, at (651) 602-7875.

//S//

WILLIAM HUNT  
State Conservationist

DIST: DIST: AE